

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 47-63 are pending in the application, with 47, 53, and 56 being the independent claims. Claims 47, 50, 52-57, and 59 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 47-63 as allegedly being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. (Paper No. 02212005, page 2).

With respect to independent claims 47, 53, and 56, the Examiner alleges that the claims lack essential structural cooperative relationship. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the expression “adapted to receive at least one of a plurality of reagents for synthesizing a polymer” allegedly renders claims 47, 53, and 57 unclear in that it is unclear what structural properties are intended. Applicants respectfully disagree. The above claims, as amended, recite a reaction mount that is structurally adapted to receive at least one of a plurality of reagents for synthesizing a polymer. One of ordinary skills in the relevant art(s) would be able to interpret the above claims, in light of Applicants’ specification, to practice a reaction mount having the claimed adaptation. Consequently, any reaction mount that is not so adapted would not be applicable. Moreover, the above expression also provides antecedent support that is required to explain the

interrelationship (e.g., the structural cooperative relationship) of certain features recited in the dependent claims (see, for example, claims 52 and 57).

Regarding claims 52 and 57, the Examiner asserts that the expression “adapted to deliver” allegedly renders the claims unclear because it is unclear whether or not the reagents are positively recited. Applicants respectfully disagree. The above claims, as amended, recite a dispensing module that is structurally adapted to deliver at least one of said plurality of reagents, which are recited in independent claims 47 and 56. One of ordinary skills in the relevant art(s) would also be able to interpret the above claims, in light of Applicants’ specification, to practice a dispensing module having the claimed adaptation. Additionally, as discussed above, the above expression explains the interrelationship among features recited in independent claims 47 and 56 with those recited in dependent claims 53 and 57, respectively.

Regarding claim 50, the Examiner argues that the language “said plurality of exit ports” lacks antecedent support. The above amendment has rendered this rejection moot.

Regarding claims 50, 53, and 63, the Examiner argues that the relationship of the “vacuum line adapted to drain liquid” to the “drain lines” is unclear. The above amendment has rendered these rejections moot.

Regarding claims 52 and 57, the Examiner asserts that “it is unclear whether the dispensing module transfers reagents ‘from said plurality of reaction mounts’ ‘to a reaction mount’ as stated, or if reagent delivery is ‘to a reaction mount’ *selected* ‘from said plurality of reaction mounts’ as disclosed.” Although Applicants do not agree with the Examiner’s characterization of the previously presented claims 52 and 57, the above amendment has rendered these rejections moot.

Regarding claim 56, the Examiner appears to object to the second appearance of “fluid delivery”. This rejection is moot in light of the above amendment.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and allowance of the above claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 47-49, 51, 52, 56, 57 and 60-62 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,871,683 to Harris *et al.* (herein referred to as “Harris”). (Paper No. 02212005, page 4). Applicants respectfully traverse notwithstanding the above amendment.

Harris does not disclose each and every element, limitation, and/or feature of Applicants’ invention. With respect to independent claims 47 and 56, Harris does not disclose, for example:

a plurality of reaction mounts removably insertable onto said plurality of liquid conduits, **wherein each liquid conduit forms a chamber below a corresponding reaction mount**, wherein at least one of said plurality of reaction mounts is adapted to receive at least one of a plurality of reagents for synthesizing a polymer.

The apparatus described by Harris is not structurally comparable to Applicants’ claims 47 and 56. The Examiner argues that Harris describes a “through hole 60” and the “through hole 60 in the carousel which holds the reaction mount 20 constitutes the instant conduit and the portion below support 22 constitutes the chamber.” Applicants, however, respectfully disagree. Applicants do not concede that Harris discloses a “through hole 60” comparable to Applicants’ claimed “liquid conduits”, or a “reaction mount 20” comparable to Applicant’s claimed “reaction mount.” More specifically, Harris does not disclose “wherein each liquid conduit (i.e., ‘through hole 60’) forms a chamber below a corresponding reaction mount (i.e., ‘reaction mount 20’), as recited in Applicants’ claims 47 and 56.

Referring to FIGs. 2 and 4 (see also, col. 3, lines 55-66 and col. 4, lines 17-19) of Harris, the feature that the Examiner argues is a “reaction mount 20” is actually described by Harris as being the ***upper section 20*** of a capsule 14 . Capsule 14 includes a lower section 18, an upper section 20, and a filter 22. The upper section 20 comprises a cylindrical tubular section 24, and the lower section 18 includes a cylindrical base portion 28. The cylindrical base portion 28 is adapted to snugly receive the outside surface at the lower end of the tubular section 24. The upper portion 20 is cemented within the lower portion 18 to secure the filter 22 within the capsule 14.

Hence, the component (i.e., upper section 20) that Examiner alleges is a reaction mount is merely a portion of a capsule 14, and must be combined with a filter 22 and lower section 18 to completely form a capsule 14. Harris further discloses that the base portion 28 (of lower section 18) tapers downward to form an interior passage 40, below filter 22. Therefore, when the Examiner refers to “the portion below support 22” in the Office Action, the Examiner is actually referring to a passageway at the bottom of capsule 14. Interior passage 40 clearly is not formed by any “liquid conduit formed within a carousel”. Passage 40 is formed prior to (and independent of) capsule 14 being installed on turntable 12.

The feature that the Examiner refers to as being a “through hole 60” is described by Harris as being a ***restraining means 60*** that includes a plurality of openings 62 formed vertically through a turntable 12 (see col. 5, lines 7-9). When capsule 14 is installed on turntable 12, Harris does not disclose that the “*restraining means 60* forms a chamber below a corresponding *capsule 14*.” In fact, referring to FIGs. 4 and 5, capsule 14 protrudes through opening 62 and out of turntable 12. There is no chamber below capsule 14. And, once again, restraining means 60 (or opening 62) does not form

passage 40 (that is a part of capsule 14) below a corresponding upper section 20 (or capsule 14).

As discussed above, Harris does not disclose independent claims 47 and 56. Since claims 48-52 and 57-63 depend from claims 47 and 56, respectively, the dependent claims are patentable over Harris for at least the reasons stated above, in addition to the features recited therein. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), and allowance of the above claims are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 50, 53-55, 58, 59 and 63, as allegedly being obvious over Harris and in view of U.S. Patent 5,106,583 to Raysberg *et al.* (herein referred to as "Raysberg"). (Paper No. 02212005, page 5). Applicants respectfully traverse notwithstanding the above amendment.

Neither Harris nor Raysberg teaches or suggests each and every element, limitation, and/or feature of Applicants' invention. As discussed above with respect to the rejections of independent claims 47 and 56, Harris does not teach or suggest, for example:

a plurality of reaction mounts removably insertable onto said plurality of liquid conduits, **wherein each liquid conduit forms a chamber below a corresponding reaction mount**, wherein at least one of said plurality of reaction mounts is adapted to receive at least one of a plurality of reagents for synthesizing a polymer.

With respect to independent claim 53, Harris also does not teach or suggest, for example:

a plurality of liquid conduits formed within said carousel, **wherein each liquid conduit forms a chamber below a corresponding reaction mount**, wherein at least one of said plurality of reaction

mounts is adapted to receive at least one of a plurality of reagents for synthesizing a polymer

Raysberg fails to cure the defects of Harris since Raysberg also do not teach or suggest, inter alia, the above features. Raysberg's "rotating turret 19" does not include a plurality of liquid conduits formed within said carousel, wherein each liquid conduit forms a chamber below a corresponding reaction mount", as recited in independent claims 47, 53, and 56. Since claims 48-52, 54, 55, and 57-63 depend from claims 47, 53, and 56, respectively, the dependent claims are patentable over Harris and/or Raysberg for at least the reasons stated above, in addition to the features recited therein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), and allowance of the above claims.

Rejection for Non-Statutory Double Patenting

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 47, 48, 50-52, and 56-61 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-15 of U.S. Patent 6,264,891. To the extent this rejection is applicable to the pending claims as amended, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's rejection to be held in abeyance until subject matter is indicated as being allowable without regard to this rejection.

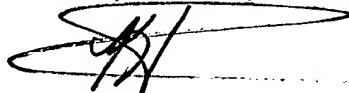
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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